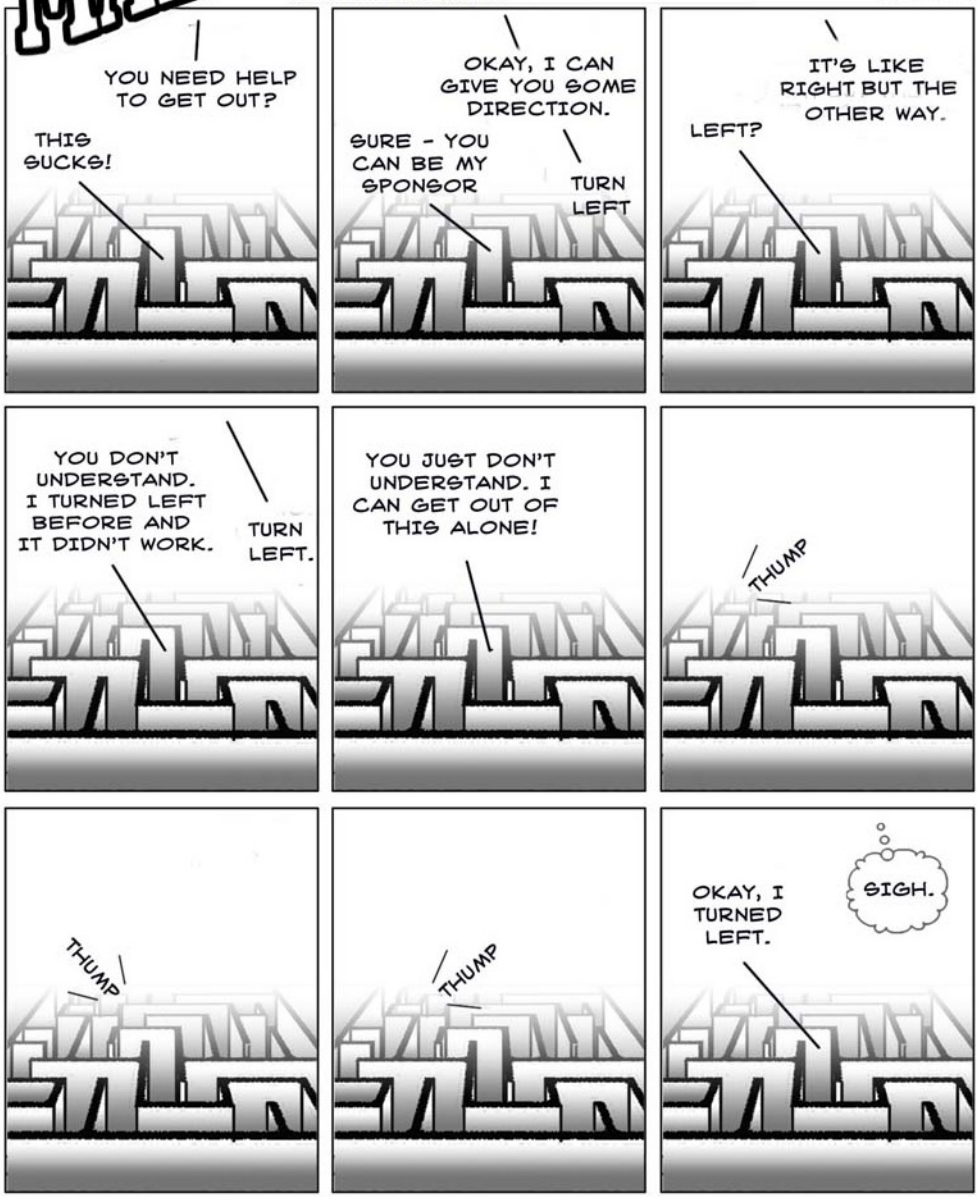
MAZEING RECOVERY

A NEWCOMER

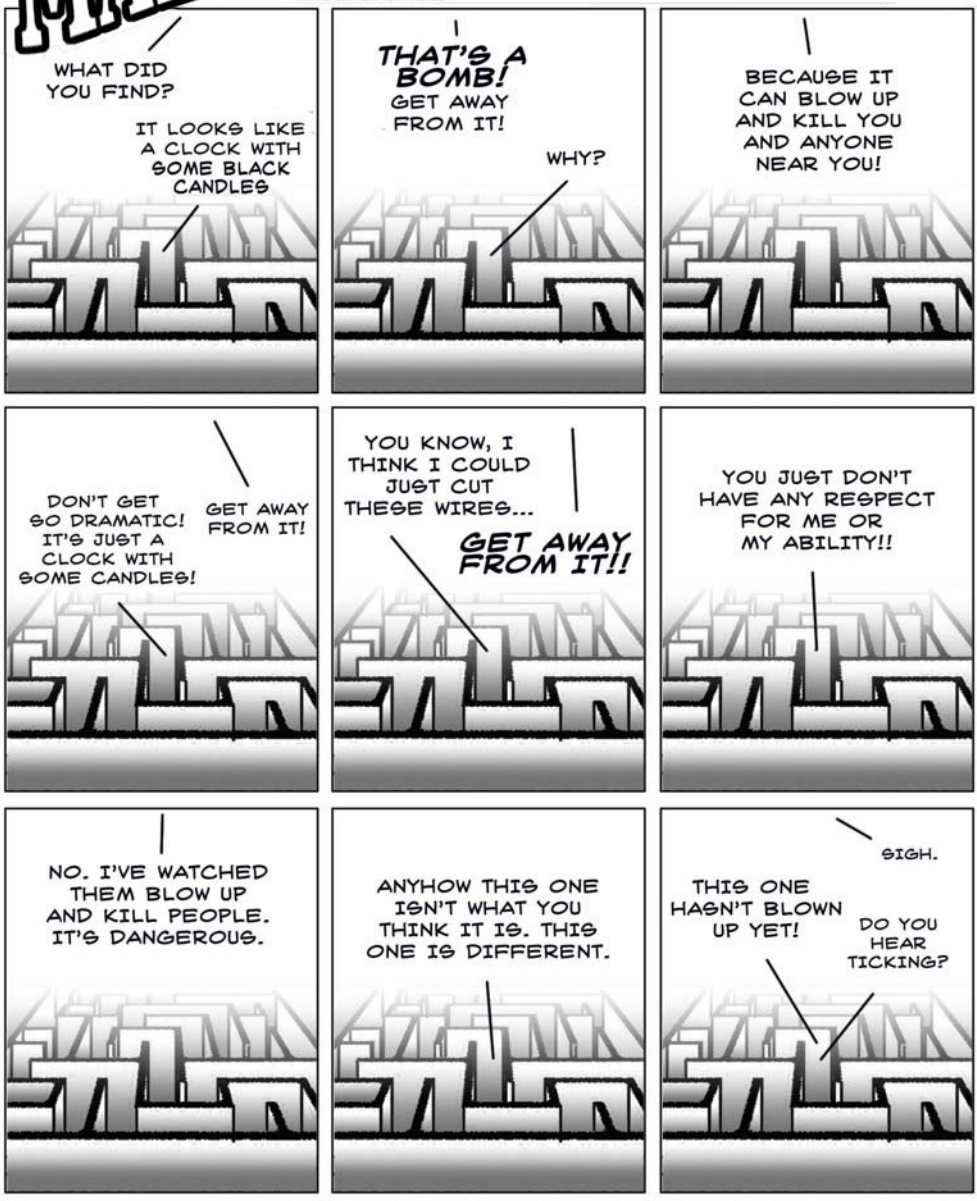
BY JOE A.


YOU NEED HELP TO GET OUT?
THIS SUCKS!
OKAY, I CAN GIVE YOU SOME DIRECTION.
SURE - YOU CAN BE MY SPONSOR
TURN LEFT
IT'S LIKE RIGHT BUT THE OTHER WAY.
LEFT?
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I TURNED LEFT BEFORE AND IT DIDN'T WORK.
TURN LEFT.
YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND. I CAN GET OUT OF THIS ALONE!
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
OKAY, I TURNED LEFT.
SIGH.

MAZEING RECOVERY

THE BOMB

BY JOE A.


WHAT DID YOU FIND?
IT LOOKS LIKE A CLOCK WITH SOME BLACK CANDLES
THAT'S A BOMB! GET AWAY FROM IT!
WHY?
BECAUSE IT CAN BLOW UP AND KILL YOU AND ANYONE NEAR YOU!
DON'T GET SO DRAMATIC! IT'S JUST A CLOCK WITH SOME CANDLES!
GET AWAY FROM IT!
YOU KNOW, I THINK I COULD JUST CUT THESE WIRES...
GET AWAY FROM IT!!
YOU JUST DON'T HAVE ANY RESPECT FOR ME OR MY ABILITY!!
NO. I'VE WATCHED THEM BLOW UP AND KILL PEOPLE. IT'S DANGEROUS.
ANYHOW THIS ONE ISN'T WHAT YOU THINK IT IS. THIS ONE IS DIFFERENT.
SIGH.
THIS ONE HASN'T BLOWN UP YET!
DO YOU HEAR TICKING?

MAZEING RECOVERY

THE BUCKET

BY JOE A.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE THERE?

A BUCKET.

WHAT'S IN THEBUCKET?

GASOLINE.

WHY ARE YOU WALKING AROUND WITH A BUCKET OF GASOLINE?

I JUST LIKE IT.

DIDN'T YOU GET INTO SOME SERIOUS TROUBLE WITH A BUCKET OF GASOLINE?

NO.

SOMETHING ABOUT A FIRE, PEOPLE GETTING BURNED AND THE COPS...

NO.

AND SOMETHING WITH COURT AND JAIL AND HEAVY FINES...

OH. THAT.

LOOK, YOU'VE ALREADY SPLASHED GASOLINE ON YOUR CLOTHES AND THE WALL... MAYBE THIS IS JUST A BAD IDEA.

OK.

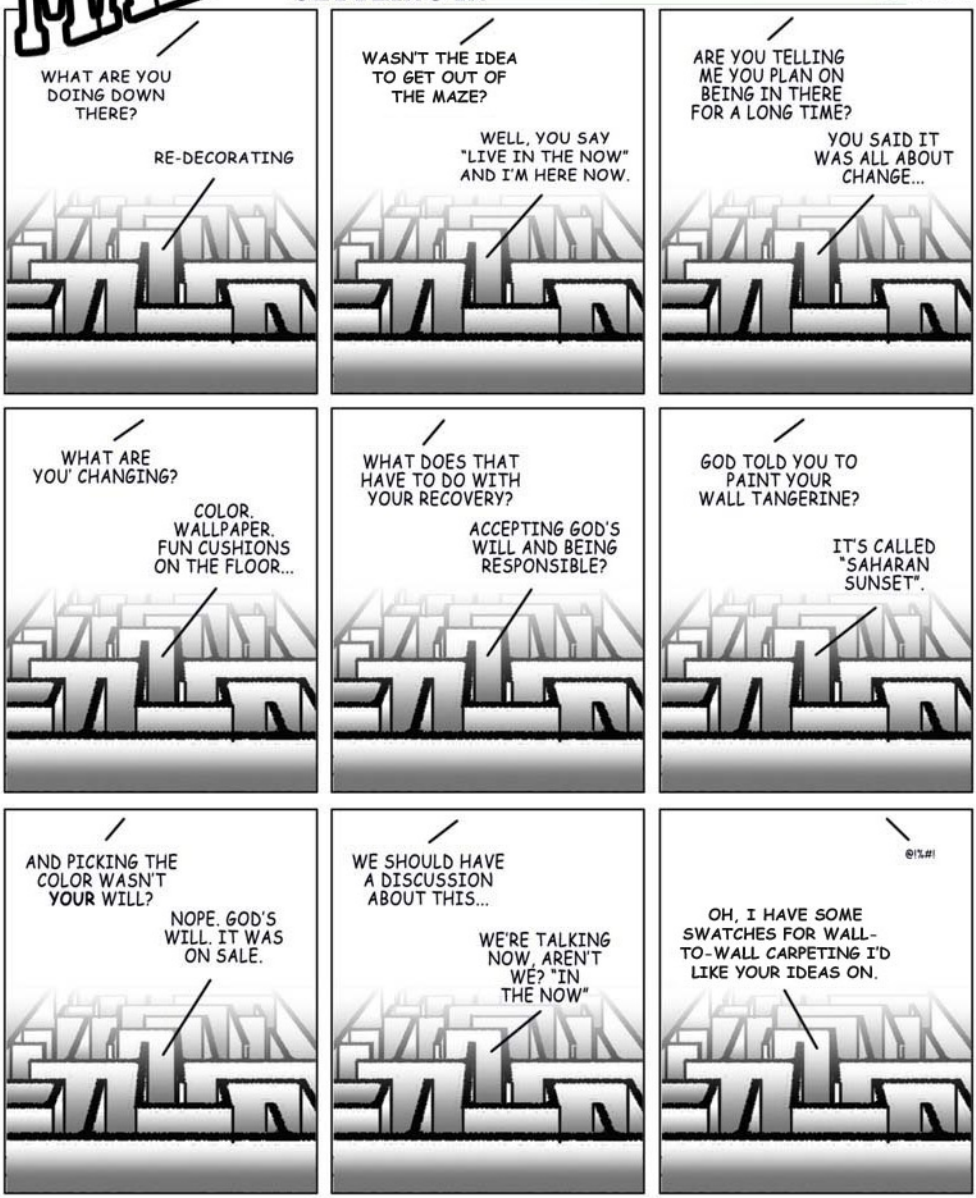
WHAT'S THAT IN YOUR OTHER HAND?

ROAD FLARES.

MAZEING RECOVERY

SETTLING IN

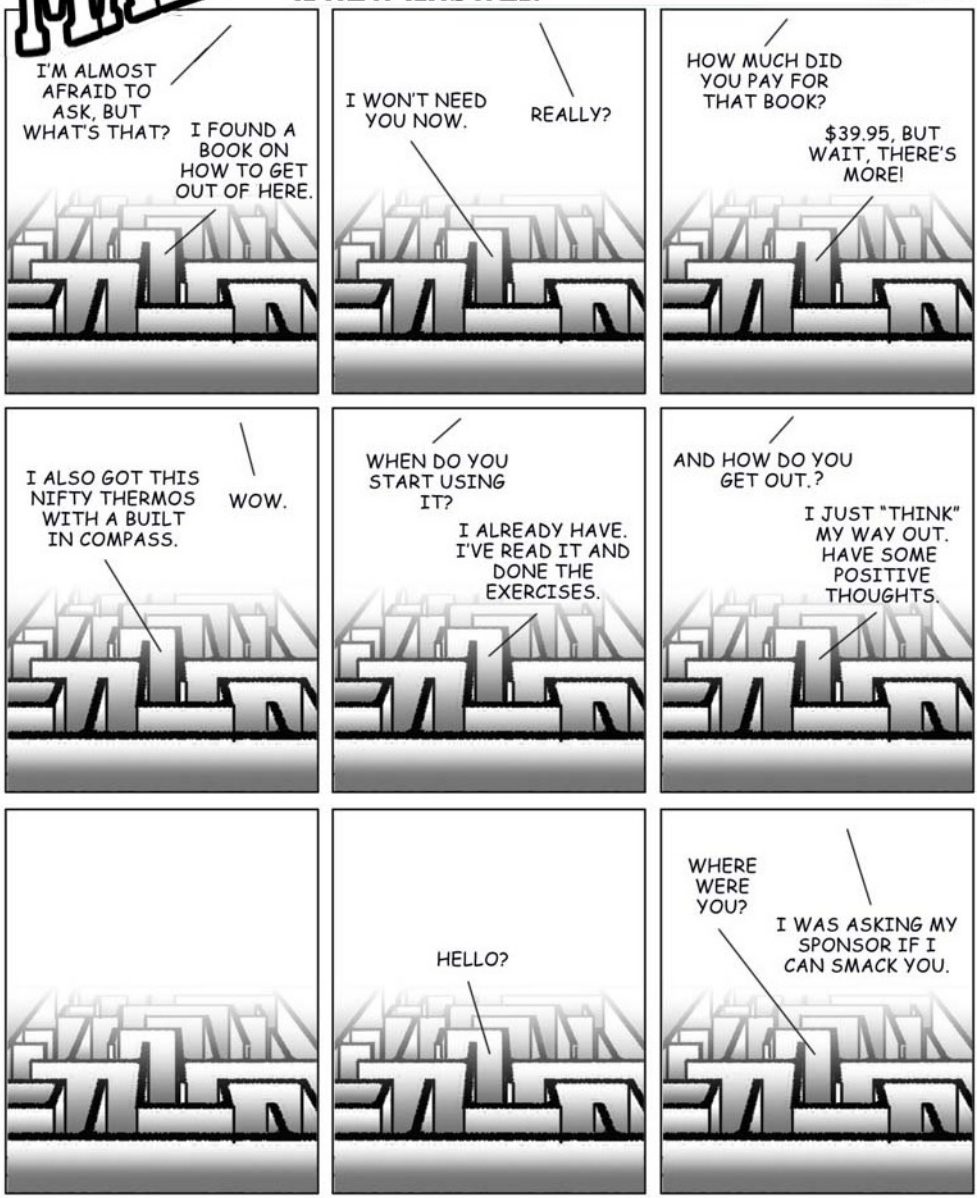
BY JOE A.


WHAT ARE YOU DOING DOWN THERE?
RE-DECORATING
WASN'T THE IDEA TO GET OUT OF THE MAZE?
WELL, YOU SAY "LIVE IN THE NOW" AND I'M HERE NOW.
ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU PLAN ON BEING IN THERE FOR A LONG TIME?
YOU SAID IT WAS ALL ABOUT CHANGE...
WHAT ARE YOU' CHANGING?
COLOR. WALLPAPER. FUN CUSHIONS ON THE FLOOR...
WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR RECOVERY?
ACCEPTING GOD'S WILL AND BEING RESPONSIBLE?
GOD TOLD YOU TO PAINT YOUR WALL TANGERINE?
IT'S CALLED "SAHARAN SUNSET".
AND PICKING THE COLOR WASN'T YOUR WILL?
NOPE. GOD'S WILL. IT WAS ON SALE.
WE SHOULD HAVE A DISCUSSION ABOUT THIS...
WE'RE TALKING NOW, AREN'T WE? "IN THE NOW"
@!%#!
OH, I HAVE SOME SWATCHES FOR WALL-TO-WALL CARPETING I'D LIKE YOUR IDEAS ON.

MAZEING RECOVERY

A NEW ANSWER

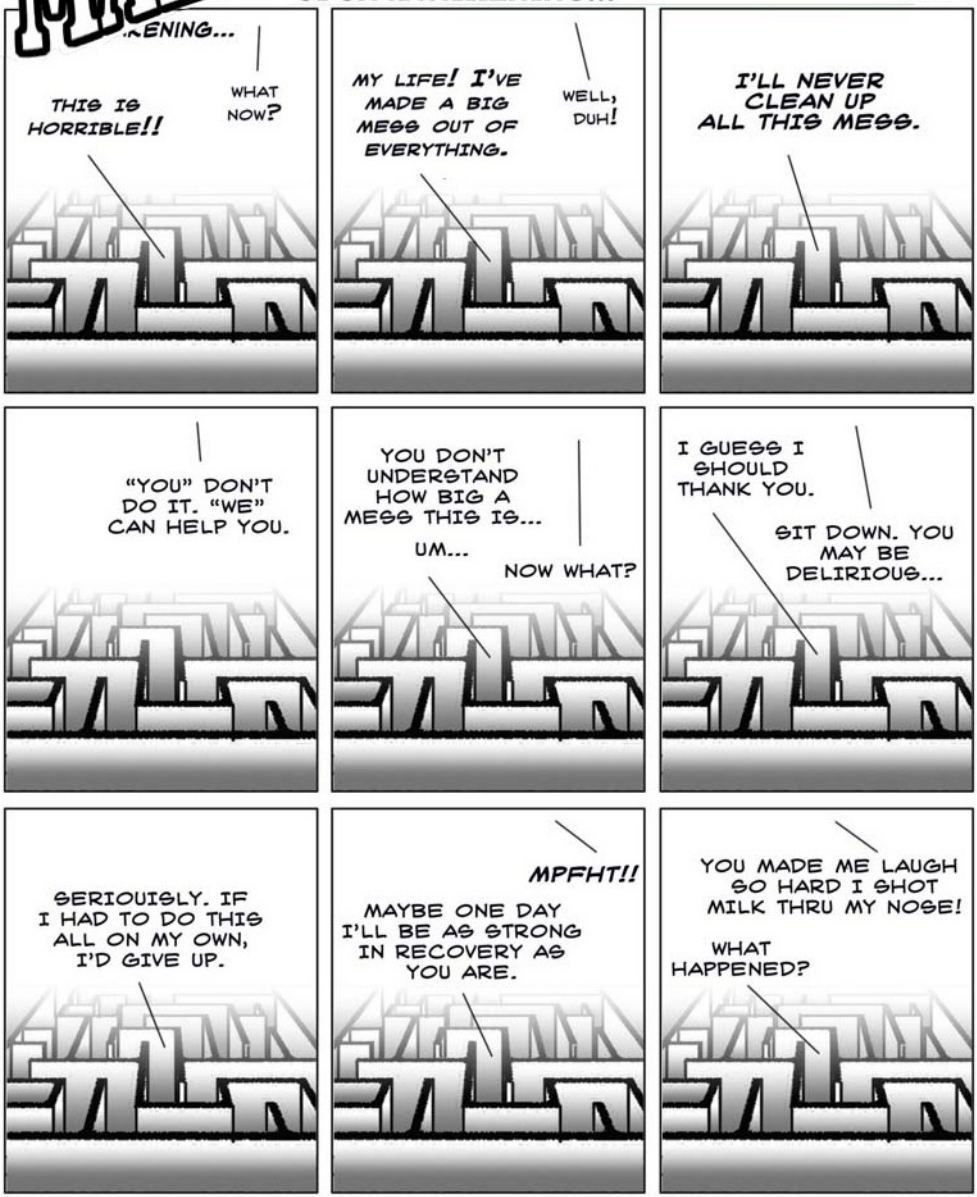
BY JOE A.


I'M ALMOST AFRAID TO ASK, BUT WHAT'S THAT?
I FOUND A BOOK ON HOW TO GET OUT OF HERE.
I WON'T NEED YOU NOW.
REALLY?
HOW MUCH DID YOU PAY FOR THAT BOOK?
$39.95, BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!
I ALSO GOT THIS NIFTY THERMOS WITH A BUILT IN COMPASS.
WOW.
WHEN DO YOU START USING IT?
I ALREADY HAVE. I'VE READ IT AND DONE THE EXERCISES.
AND HOW DO YOU GET OUT.?
I JUST "THINK" MY WAY OUT. HAVE SOME POSITIVE THOUGHTS.
HELLO?
WHERE WERE YOU?
I WAS ASKING MY SPONSOR IF I CAN SMACK YOU.

MAZEING RECOVERY

UPON AWAKENING...

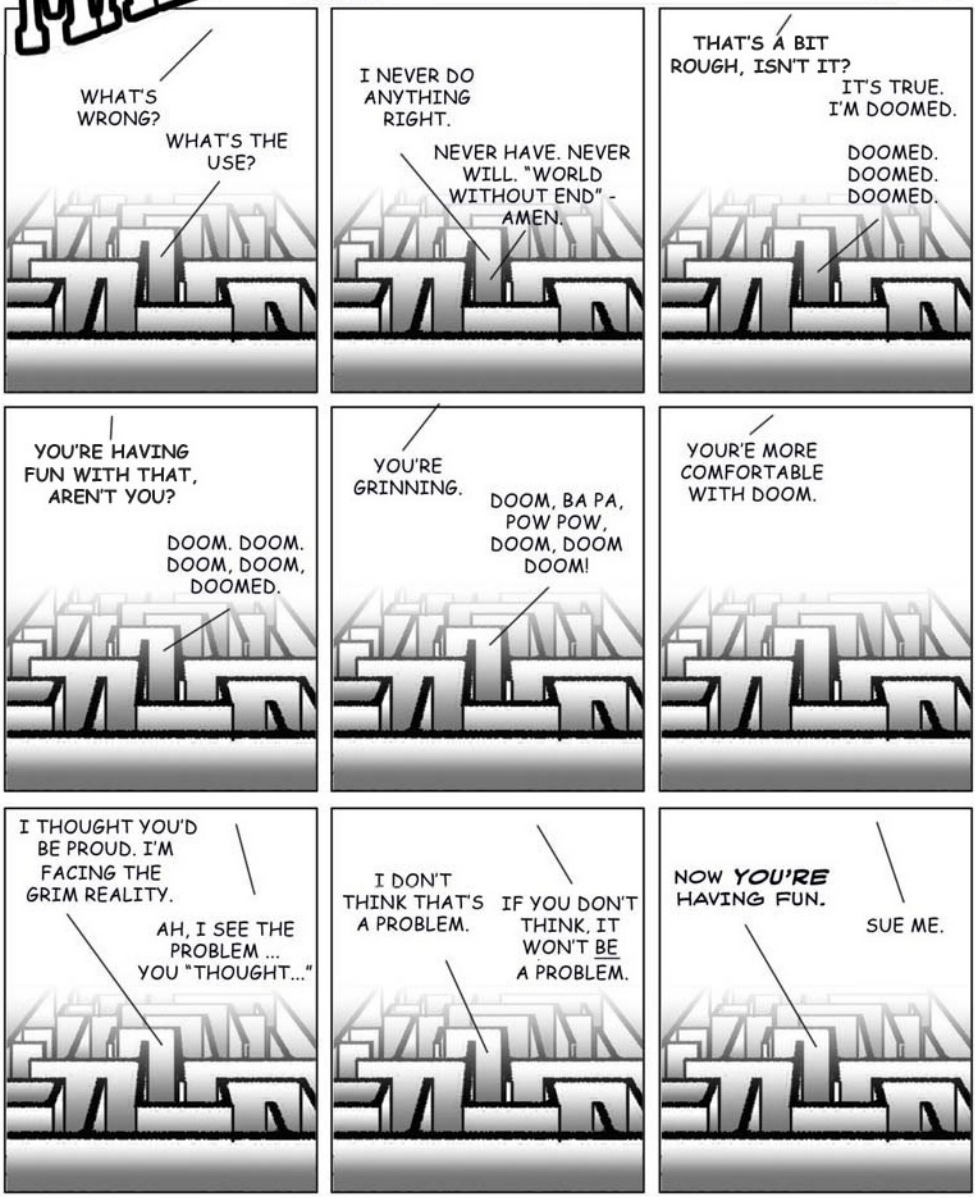
BY JOE A.


...ENING...
THIS IS HORRIBLE!!
WHAT NOW?
MY LIFE! I'VE MADE A BIG MESS OUT OF EVERYTHING.
WELL, DUH!
I'LL NEVER CLEAN UP ALL THIS MESS.
"YOU" DON'T DO IT. "WE" CAN HELP YOU.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW BIG A MESS THIS IS...
UM...
NOW WHAT?
I GUESS I SHOULD THANK YOU.
SIT DOWN. YOU MAY BE DELIRIOUS...
SERIOUSLY. IF I HAD TO DO THIS ALL ON MY OWN, I'D GIVE UP.
MPFHT!!
MAYBE ONE DAY I'LL BE AS STRONG IN RECOVERY AS YOU ARE.
YOU MADE ME LAUGH SO HARD I SHOT MILK THRU MY NOSE!
WHAT HAPPENED?

MAZEING RECOVERY

DOOM

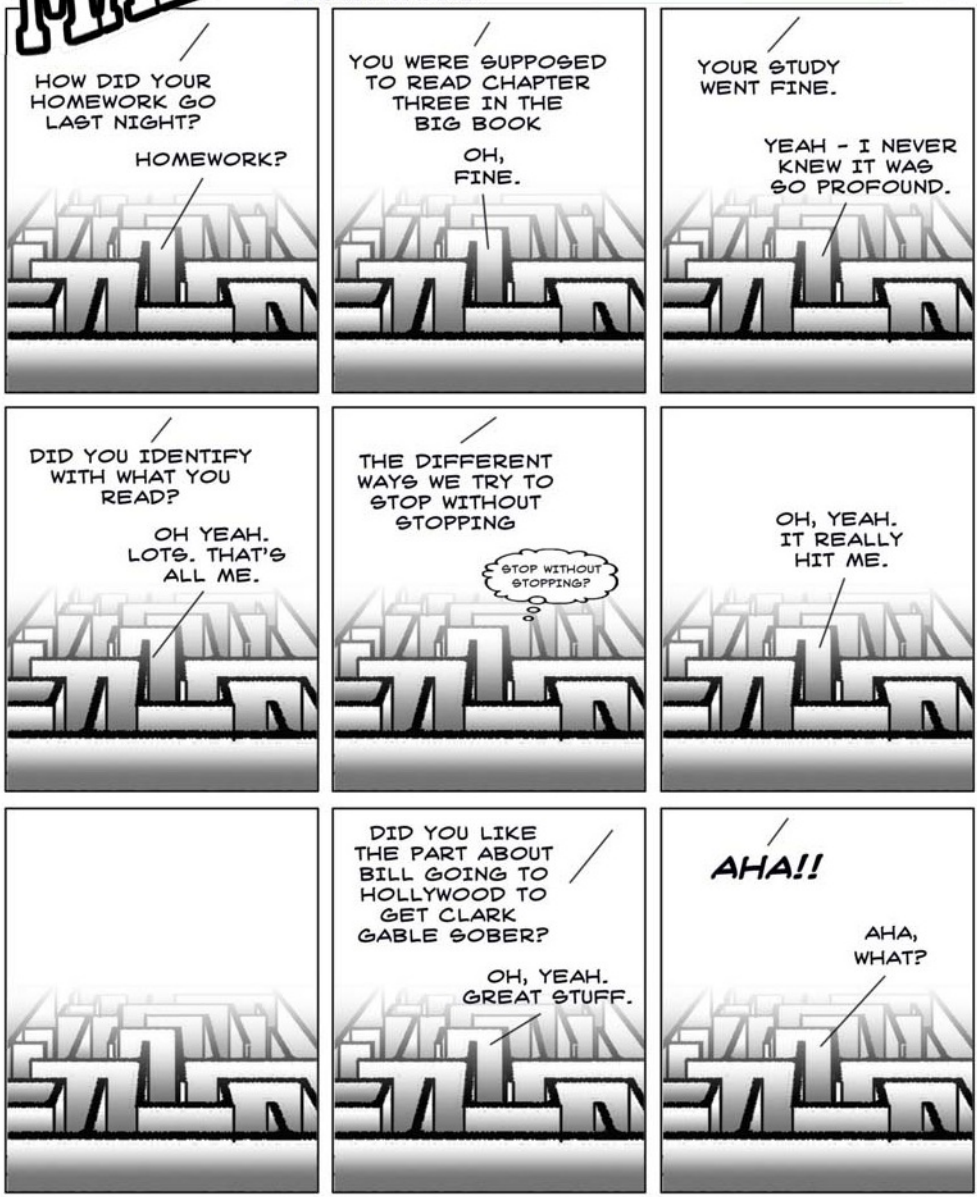
BY JOE A.


WHAT'S WRONG?
WHAT'S THE USE?
I NEVER DO ANYTHING RIGHT.
NEVER HAVE. NEVER WILL. "WORLD WITHOUT END" - AMEN.
THAT'S A BIT ROUGH, ISN'T IT?
IT'S TRUE. I'M DOOMED.
DOOMED. DOOMED. DOOMED.
YOU'RE HAVING FUN WITH THAT, AREN'T YOU?
DOOM. DOOM. DOOM, DOOM, DOOMED.
YOU'RE GRINNING.
DOOM, BA PA, POW POW, DOOM, DOOM DOOM!
YOUR'E MORE COMFORTABLE WITH DOOM.
I THOUGHT YOU'D BE PROUD. I'M FACING THE GRIM REALITY.
AH, I SEE THE PROBLEM ... YOU "THOUGHT..."
I DON'T THINK THAT'S A PROBLEM.
IF YOU DON'T THINK, IT WON'T BE A PROBLEM.
NOW YOU'RE HAVING FUN.
SUE ME.

MAZEING RECOVERY

HOMEWORK

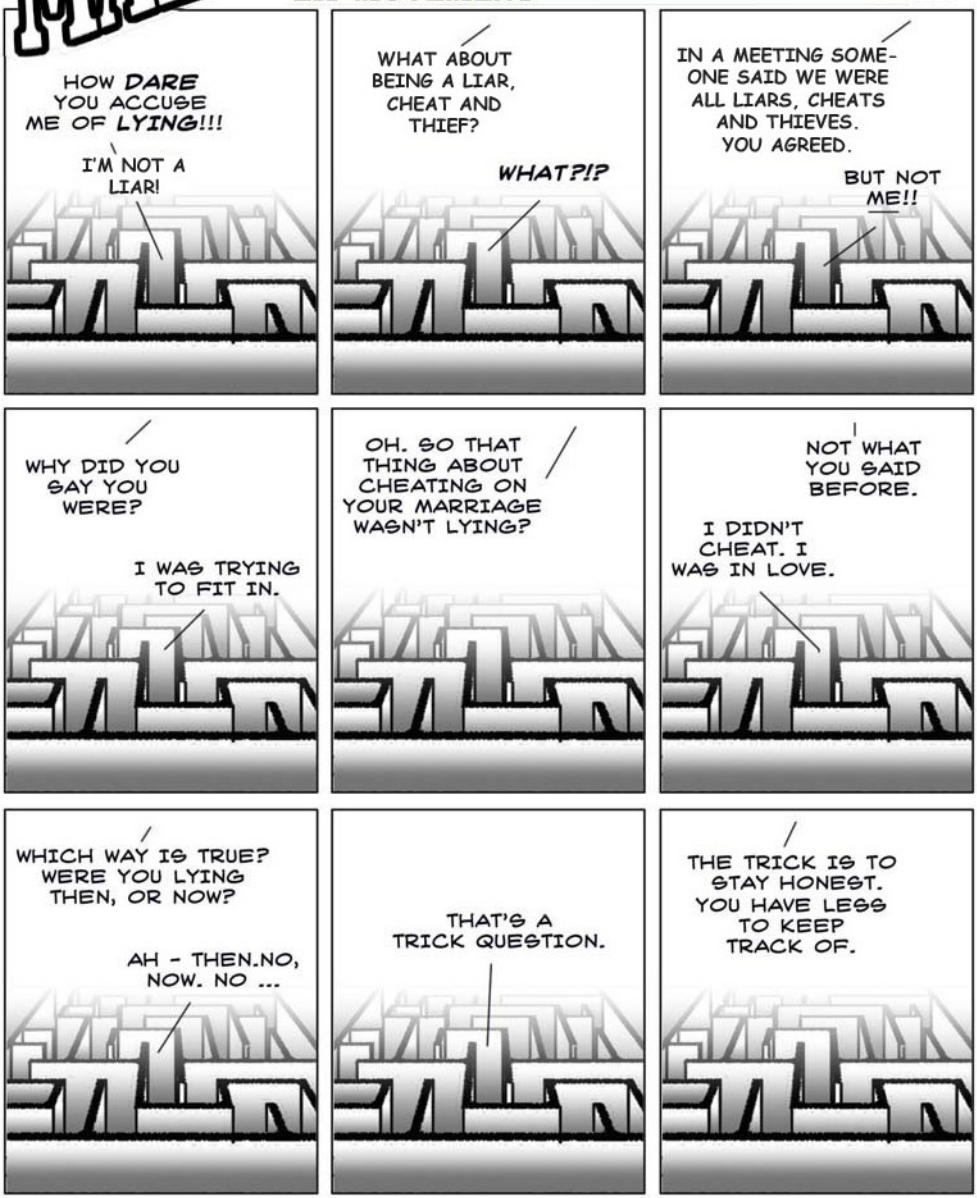
BY JOE A.


HOW DID YOUR HOMEWORK GO LAST NIGHT?
HOMEWORK?
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO READ CHAPTER THREE IN THE BIG BOOK
OH, FINE.
YOUR STUDY WENT FINE.
YEAH - I NEVER KNEW IT WAS SO PROFOUND.
DID YOU IDENTIFY WITH WHAT YOU READ?
OH YEAH. LOTS. THAT'S ALL ME.
THE DIFFERENT WAYS WE TRY TO STOP WITHOUT STOPPING
STOP WITHOUT STOPPING?
OH, YEAH. IT REALLY HIT ME.
DID YOU LIKE THE PART ABOUT BILL GOING TO HOLLYWOOD TO GET CLARK GABLE SOBER?
OH, YEAH. GREAT STUFF.
AHA!!
AHA, WHAT?

MAZEING RECOVERY

LIP MOVEMENT

BY JOE A.


HOW DARE YOU ACCUSE ME OF LYING!!!
I'M NOT A LIAR!
WHAT ABOUT BEING A LIAR, CHEAT AND THIEF?
WHAT?!?
IN A MEETING SOMEONE SAID WE WERE ALL LIARS, CHEATS AND THIEVES. YOU AGREED.
BUT NOT ME!!
WHY DID YOU SAY YOU WERE?
I WAS TRYING TO FIT IN.
OH. SO THAT THING ABOUT CHEATING ON YOUR MARRIAGE WASN'T LYING?
I NOT WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE.
I DIDN'T CHEAT. I WAS IN LOVE.
WHICH WAY IS TRUE? WERE YOU LYING THEN, OR NOW?
AH - THEN.NO, NOW. NO ...
THAT'S A TRICK QUESTION.
THE TRICK IS TO STAY HONEST. YOU HAVE LESS TO KEEP TRACK OF.

MAZEING RECOVERY COMPANY

BY JOE A.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

SHHHH ... BE QUIET. I THINK I HEARD SOMETHING.

LIKE WHAT?

LIKE SOMEONE ELSE IS IN HERE.

THERE IT WAS AGAIN!! SOMEONE ELSE IS IN HERE!!

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ARE IN HERE.

THOUSANDS?

SURE. YOU DON'T THINK THIS MAZE WAS BUILT JUST FOR YOU, DO YOU?

BIG SURPRISE.

I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT.

WHAT DO I DO IF I MEET ONE OF THEM?

TRY TO HELP THEM...

EEEK!!

AND TRY NOT TO SCREAM.

HELLO.

MAZEING RECOVERY

THE NEWER-COMER

BY JOE A.

WHERE IS YOUR FRIEND?

I DON'T KNOW.

DIDN'T YOU TALK?

YEP, AND THIS GUY IS REALLY WACKO.

HOW DO YOU MEAN?

HE DIDN'T KNOW *ANYTHING*!!

HMMM. SOUNDS LIKE YOU A FEW WEEKS AGO.

NAW. I WASN'T THAT BAD.

- AH, RESTRAINT OF TONGUE AND PEN -

DID I SAY SOMETHING WRONG?

NO - THAT WAS FOR ME. WHY DO YOU THINK HE WAS WACKO?

HE REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO STOP.

AND YOU DO?

YEAH. I CAN'T DRINK ANY MORE - IT'LL KILL ME.

I NEED TO SIT DOWN.

DID I SAY SOMETHING WRONG?

NO. YOU SAID SOMETHING RIGHT. -- FOR THE FIRST TIME.

MAZEING RECOVERY

WORKING WITH OTHERS

BY JOE A.

IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO START WORKING WITH OTHERS.

NO WAY. I'M NOT READY.

YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER TO ANYONE NEWER.

SURE. ALL WE HAVE TO OFFER IS OUR EXPERIENCE.

REALLY?

A TEENY TINY AMOUNT -- YES.

I HAVE EXPERIENCE?

COOL. I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMEONE IN HERE...

BE GENTLE.

THERE THEY ARE.

IF YOU DON'T STOP DRINKING YOU WILL DIE!!

HI.

EEEEEEE!!

I GUESS THEY WEREN'T READY.

I THINK WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT YOUR APPROACH.

MAZEING RECOVERY

A GOOD HEART

BY JOE A.

YOU DON'T KNOW ME.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I'M NOT ALL THAT BAD.

I HAVE A GOOD HEART.

HMMM.

OKAY, I WILL ALLOW THAT YOU HAVE A GOOD HEART.

BUT YOU HAVE A LYING MOUTH...

STEALING HANDS...

A NASTY CROTCH...

GOSSIPY EARS...

GREEDY EYES...

FEET THAT TAKE YOU WHERE YOU SHOULDN'T GO...

AND A SCHEMING BRAIN.

YOUR GOOD HEART IS OUTVOTED!

YOU'RE JUST MEAN.

MAZEING RECOVERY

MORE DIRECTION

BY JOE A.

ARE YOU READING THE BOOK?

YEP. UNDERLINING AND HIGHLIGHTING, JUST LIKE YOU SAID.

VERY GOOD. WHAT ARE YOU DOING AT HOME GROUP?

I COME EARLY TO HELP SET UP CHAIRS...

...AND I STAY LATE TO HELP CLEAN UP. I GET TO TALK TO PEOPLE THAT WAY.

VERY GOOD. ARE YOU TALKING WITH NEWCOMERS?

UM - I KIND OF LEAVE THAT TO PEOPLE WITH MORE TIME.

I DON'T HAVE MUCH TO SHARE, YET.

I BEG TO DIFFER. YOU HAVE SOME EXPERIENCE TO OFFER -- TO ANYONE WITH LESS TIME THAN YOU.

JUST SAY HELLO TO MAKE THEM FEEL AT HOME.

I DON'T KNOW ...

JUST DO IT.

OKAY - THERE'S ONE. HI. MY NAME IS PAT AND I'M AN ALCOHOLIC.

QUE?

HUH?

HABLES ESPANOL?

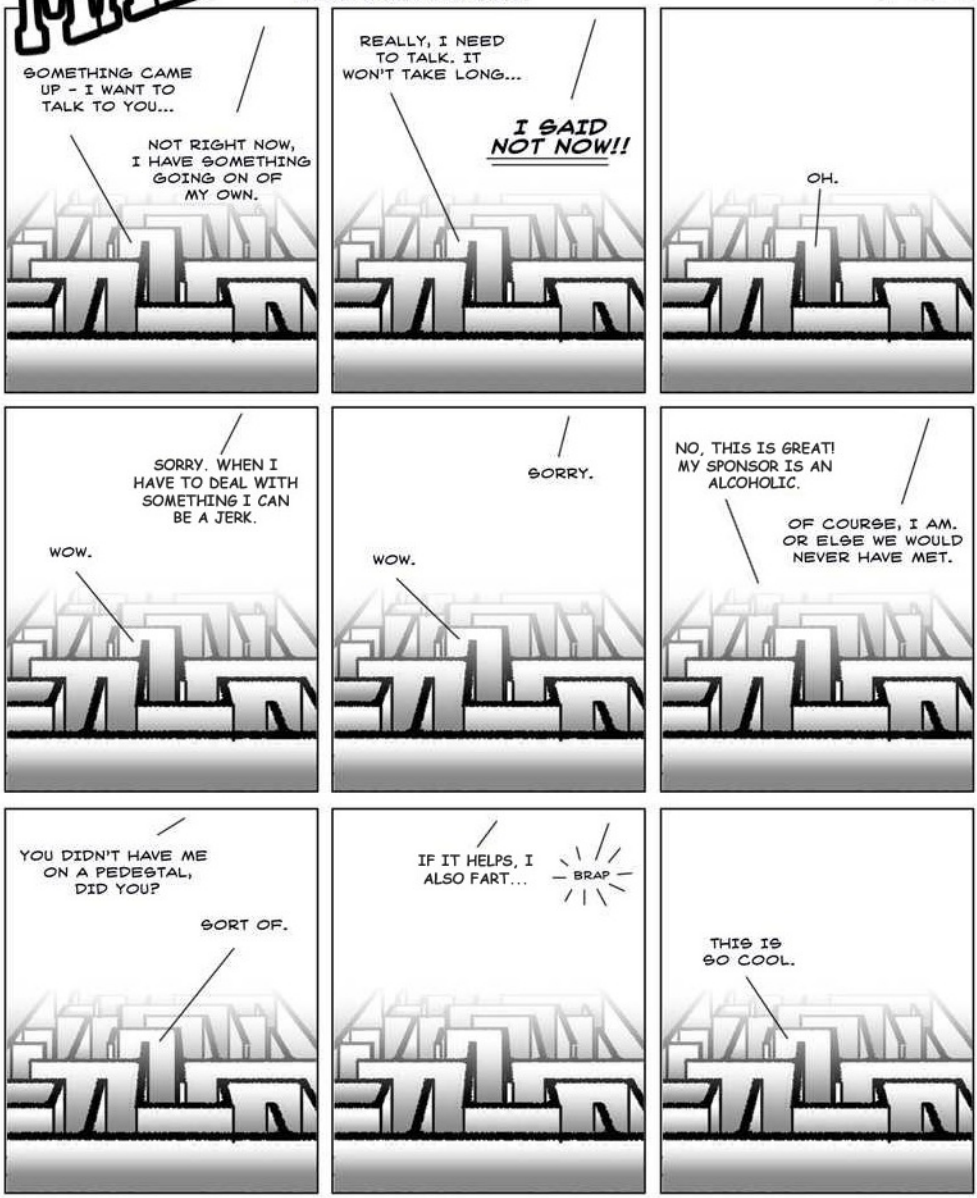
HELP ME. AND STOP GIGGLING.

QUE?

MAZEING RECOVERY

THE PEDESTAL

BY JOE A.


SOMETHING CAME UP - I WANT TO TALK TO YOU...
NOT RIGHT NOW, I HAVE SOMETHING GOING ON OF MY OWN.
REALLY, I NEED TO TALK. IT WON'T TAKE LONG...
I SAID NOT NOW!!
OH.
SORRY. WHEN I HAVE TO DEAL WITH SOMETHING I CAN BE A JERK.
WOW.
SORRY.
WOW.
NO, THIS IS GREAT! MY SPONSOR IS AN ALCOHOLIC.
OF COURSE, I AM. OR ELSE WE WOULD NEVER HAVE MET.
YOU DIDN'T HAVE ME ON A PEDESTAL, DID YOU?
SORT OF.
IF IT HELPS, I ALSO FART...
BRAP
THIS IS SO COOL.

MAZEING RECOVERY

THE RULE

BY JOE A.

HEY, HEY HEY!! WHAT'S GOING ON DOWN THERE.

OH, THIS IS MY NEW FRIEND.

HI.

WE MET AT A MEETING.

"AND LONLEY HEARTS PINE..."

WHAT?

IF YOU READ THE BOOK, YOU'D KNOW.

I'M NOT TRYING TO CAUSE A PROBLEM...

IT'S NOT YOU. OR YOU. IT'S THE TWO OF YOU. TWO PEOPLE TOGETHER BECOME A THIRD THING.

BUT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT THE PROGRAM...

THERE IS AN UNWRITTEN RULE: BOYS WITH BOYS, GIRLS WITH GIRLS.

BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND...

ARE YOU SAYING YOU WOULD ***NEVER*** THINK OF SLEEPING WITH HER? OR YOU HIM?

WELL ... I WOULDN'T SAY ***NEVER***...

YOU ARE BOTH IN EARLY SOBRIETY AND ... LET'S SAY THIS CONFUSES THE ISSUE.

BUT...

NEW DIRECTION. YOU CAN ONLY GO OUT FOR COFFEE IF THERE ARE AN UNEVEN NUMBER OF PEOPLE.

HEY!

BUT WE ARE BOTH GROWN UPS!

IT DOESN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THAT IN THE BOOK!!

IT DOESNT SAY ANYTHING ABOUT WIPING, EITHER!

HMMM, THREE OR FIVE PEOPLE COULD BE VERY INTERESTING...

MAZEING RECOVERY

THE SPONSOR'S SPONSOR

BY JOE A.

PROBLEM?

YEAH.

WHAT'S WRONG?

WASN'T YOURS TO LOSE.

I THINK I LOST ONE

I KNOW.

PAGE 89.

I KNOW.

I NEVER WANT ANYONE TO GO BACK OUT.

IF YOU DID, I PROBABLY WOULDN'T BE WORKING WITH YOU.

YOU GET TOO CLOSE TO YOUR SPONSEES...

THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TOLD

... BUT HOW DO YOU NOT CARE.

YOU GOT ME. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO NOT CARE...

I USED TO NOT CARE A LOT. WHEN I WAS DRUNK.

I HAD A BLACK BELT IN NOT CARING, TOO.

BUT IT'S DIFFERENT NOW.

YOUR HEART WOKE UP.

HELLO?

YOU'RE UP.

MAZEING RECOVERY

STEP ZERO

BY JOE A.

HI. IS THIS YOUR FIRST MEETING?

WELL, I'M NOT REALLY AN ALCOHOLIC...

NO? WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?

I'VE GOT THIS PAPER THE JUDGE SAYS I HAVE TO GET SIGNED...

DRUNK DRIVING?

WELL, IT'S ALL A BIG MIS-UNDERSTANDING...

IT HAPPENS. WAS THAT YOUR FIRST DUI?

WELL ... NO. BUT I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM WITH DRINKING.

JUST REALLY BAD LUCK.

YEAH. YOU DO UNDERSTAND.

HOW ARE THINGS AT HOME?

NOT SO GOOD. WE TALKED ABOUT A DIVORCE...

THIS CRAP HAS TO STOP.

CONGRATULATIONS. THAT'S STEP ZERO.

STEP ZERO?

STEP ZERO.

"THIS CRAP HAS TO STOP" - CAN I GET YOU A CUP OF COFFEE?

MAZEING RECOVERY

THE REAL QUESTION

BY JOE A.

YEP.

YOU KNOW, I DON'T WANT TO SOUND SNOOTY, BUT THERE ARE SOME SICK PEOPLE IN THESE MEETINGS.

WE ALL HAVE OUR STORIES.

I MEAN, SOME OF THE THINGS THEY TALK ABOUT I WOULD ***NEVER*** DO!

WELL, WE ALL HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON...

WHAT'S THAT?

WE TRIED EVERYTHING WE COULD TRY, AND WE COULDN'T STOP DRINKING.

WELL ... I'VE STOPPED BEFORE.

YOU DID. THEN HOW DID YOU GET COURT ORDERED TO A.A.?

I DON'T KNOW.

WHEN YOU STOPPED, DID YOU START UP AGAIN?

WELL. YES, BUT...

AH - IN HERE, THERE IS NO "BUT..." WHEN YOU STOPPED, DID YOU STAY STOPPED?

NO.

THAT'S WHAT YOU HAVE IN COMMON WITH ALL THESE PEOPLE.

WELL, DANG!

DANG, INDEED. WE HAVE ALL BEEN IN THE DEEP, DARK CORNERS OF DANG.

DANG!

MAZEING RECOVERY

ALL IN THE NAME

BY JOE A.

WHAT'S THAT?

YOU KNOW, I DO HAVE ONE VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM WITH ALL THIS A.A. STUFF

WELL, I DON'T WANT TO OFFEND YOU BUT...

... IT'S ALL THE RELIGIOUS STUFF.

WE DON'T WANT TO INTERFERE WITH YOUR FAITH.

I ACTUALLY STUDIED TO BE A ... YOU KNOW...

WE HAVE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO COULD SPEAK WITH YOU FROM YOUR OWN VIEWPOINT...

FATHER JACK?

Yes?

I HAVE SOMEONE HERE YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP...

OH! NO! I'M NOT REALLY OF HIS DENOMINATION.

PASTOR TERRY?

Hi there!

UMMM ... YOU SEE ... I'M NOT ... WELL ... I'M NOT A CHRISTIAN.

I SEE.

RABBI?

yes?

MAY WE SEE YOU FOR A MOMENT?

MAZEING RECOVERY

THAT SPONSOR THING

BY JOE A.

IT TOOK TIME TO GET INTO THIS FIX...

THIS IS ALL TOO MUCH TO TAKE IN AT ONE TIME.

WE KNOW IT TAKES TIME TO CHANGE.

BUT THE "STEP" THINGIES.

YOU ONLY HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT "STEP THINGIE ONE" AT THE MOMENT.

FIRST YOU DO ONE, THEN TWO, THEN THREE ... THEY ARE IN ORDER FOR A REASON.

BUT THERE ARE TWELVE OF THEM...

AND ALL THOSE "TOOLS" - BOOKS AND MEETINGS AND PHONE AND THAT "SPONSOR THING."

YOU DON'T LIKE A SPONSOR?

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS.

WELL, YOU ARE OBVIOUSLY A 'SPECIAL' CASE.

HOW ABOUT IF YOU USE ME AS A NATIVE GUIDE?

OH, THAT'S MUCH BETTER THAN ONE OF THOSE "SPONSOR" THINGIES.

EVERY DAY.

CAN I CALL YOU?